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The Wasatch

# Marine Maneuvers Over Uinta National Forest

BY TISH DAHMEN  
Wave Editor

One United States Marine helicopter unit teamed with Uinta National Forest rangers and ten state and federal drug law enforcement agencies to run reconnaissance flights

across Uinta and Wasatch-Cache National Forests.

The Marine unit was stationed for ten days at Russ

MacDonald/Heber City Airport from Aug. 28 to Sept. 6. The unit, part of the Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267 from Camp Pendleton, Calif., assisted law enforcement agents in searching for marijuana fields on federal lands. Special David Griffith, law enforcement of the Forest



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photo by Laurie Wynn

Above right: Staff Sgt. Timothy McMillian and Lance Cpl. Arnel Salgado Dimailig conducted tours around the make-shift Marine basecamp at the Heber City Airport. McMillian, of Brooklyn, N.Y. and Dimailig, of Hawaii, said they were impressed with the mountains.



Above: Cpl. Kimberly Milton, a crew chief on a Huey helicopter suits up for one of the many missions of the U.S. Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267. Right: Crew members pose with one of the helicopters stationed at Russ MacDonald/Heber City Airport from Aug. 28 to Sept. 6.

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Agent  
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ent branch  
Service, said

locate  
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a l  
unknown  
structures  
on forest  
lands that will  
be investigated.

The Marine unit was  
also successful in recover-  
ing a man lost for three days  
near Mirror Lake.

Griffle said teaming up with the  
Marines was not one sided. The U.S.  
Marines gained experience flying in  
mountain terrain. They flew along the  
Wasatch Mountain corridor from  
Santequin to Logan.

Participating in the operation were  
the Utah State Bureau of Investigation,  
Utah County Major Crimes Task Force,  
Wasatch Area Drug Enforcement, Drug  
Enforcement Administration, Davis  
County Metro Narcotics Strike Force,  
Salt Lake County Narcotics Task Force,  
Cáche County Narcotics Task Force,  
Weber/Morgan County Narcotics  
Task, Forest Service Law Enforcement  
& Investigations Branch and the Joint  
Task Force Six, the federal department  
of defense's county drug organization  
that provides military support to law  
enforcement agencies.

the  
manuev-  
ers failed to detect  
criminal drug activity during the  
course of the maneuvers. He said  
drought conditions and and the  
increased numbers of recreational-  
ists using forest lands may account  
for the absence of covert marajua-  
na farms.

Two years ago, two separate  
marajuana "gardens" were discov-  
ered by hunters in Weber and Salt  
Lake Counties. Both gardens yield-  
ed more than 7,000 plants. In 1990,  
a garden of 160 plants was uncov-  
ered at Cascade Springs in Wasatch  
County.

"Making our forests a safe place  
to recreate is our objective," Griffle  
said. "It's our obligation to the  
public."

Griffle said the operation did



photos by Laurie Wynn  
operated by her unit  
Marine helicopters